FIAE Abstract

Chapters 7, 8, 9, and 10 of *Fair Isn’t Always Equal* by Rick Wormeli largely concern how, when, why, and what teachers should grade in a differentiated classroom. To fully posses a classroom that utilizes differentiated instruction a teacher must understand how to implement and interpret grades. Wormeli stresses that teachers should always have assessments in mind when they are planning their lessons. Ultimately, teachers are assessors tasked with the job to get students ready to show their understanding through authentic assessment. However, there is a natural subjective nature to attaching a single letter or number to a whole piece of work. As Rick Wormeli states, “We can do better” (Wormeli, 90). To do this, Wormeli suggests several ways to structure our grading system along with many tips of what teachers should and should not do. Some practices suggest not grading non-academic aspects and allowing redo’s for all graded assessments. The heart of these chapters concerns why we grade. A teacher’s assessments should document student and teacher progress, provide feedback, and inform instructional decisions only. Once assessment is used to motivate, punish, or sort students then grading loses its meaning. The best thing a teacher can do is to establish a grading system that is transparent, informative, fair, and diversified.